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ON PAGE 1-A

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# To Vice President Bush — from Lofton with love

## LOFTON UNLEASHED

By John Lofton

I like George Bush. I really do.  
Ask him. I think he would say, "Yes, I think John likes me." And I would even go so far as to guess that he would add, "And I like John."

But the vice president's views on the Soviets really worry me because they are dangerously naive. And the one qualification any president-to-be must have is a realistic view about the Soviets.

In an interview the other night on the CBS "Nightwatch" program, Mr.

Bush said this of the Kremlin's newest top thug, Mikhail Gorbachev:

"We know we got a good communicator on their side, but what we

don't know is what he's going to communicate." The Veep said: "The jury is still out on the Soviet Union."

Commenting on the Soviet's brutal murder of Maj. Arthur D. Nicholson Jr. — or as Mr. Bush put it "the Maj. Nicholson thing" — he said that, at first, it looked like the Soviets would be conciliatory about it, that it would be "manageable." But, he said, we then saw a "hardening of the line" just before the Central Committee and the Politburo met.

What Mr. Bush was alluding to about the Nicholson murder was the embarrassing fiasco where one day a State Department spokesman said the Soviets had agreed not to permit "use of force or weapons" against American military liaison personnel in East Germany. But, a few days later, the Soviet Embassy here issued a statement saying they had made no such agreement. And the

commander of Soviet forces in East Germany told our reporter, Peter Almond, that the guard who murdered Maj. Nicholson was merely "fulfilling his duty." A hardening of the line, indeed.

Well, now. What is one to make of Mr. Bush's incredible assertion that we don't know what Mr. G is going to communicate, and that the jury is still out on the Russians? Is he serious? Alas, I fear he is.

But why? Why does Mr. Bush say he doesn't know what Mr. G is going to communicate when Mr. G has made it crystal clear what he believes? On April 22, 1983, the 113th anniversary of Lenin's birth, Mr. G attacked "American militarists" and

"the imperial ambitions of the United States," declaring that "the Leninist principles of socialist foreign policy determine all international activities of the Soviet Communist Party and the Soviet state."

And on May 13 of this year, at a celebration of the 40th anniversary of the end of World War II, Mr. G said: "The Cold War was started by the belligerent circles of the West. ... American imperialism is at the cutting edge of the war menace to humankind. The policy of the U.S.A. is growing more bellicose in character and has become a constant negative factor. ... The aggressive intent of the ruling elite of that country [us] is seen in the attempts to

undermine the military-strategic balance. ... Barbarous doctrines and concepts for using nuclear weapons are being developed. ... A policy of state terrorism is being followed against Nicaragua. ..."

This is a jury that is still out, Mr. Vice President?

This is not the first time Mr. Bush has said things about the Soviets that raise serious questions about the consistency of his skull concerning this issue. Following his attendance at the funeral of Leonid Brezhnev, Mr. Bush said of his replacement, Yuri Andropov, the former head of the KGB, that "some people" had made his old job as head of the Soviet secret police sound "horrendous."

But, said Mr. Bush of Mr. Andropov: "Maybe I speak defensively as a former head of the CIA. But leave out the operational side of the KGB — the naughty things they allegedly (?) do. Here's a man who has had access to a tremendous amount of intelligence over the years. In my judgment, he would be much less apt to misread the intentions of the United States."

Commenting on the fact that Mr. Andropov was "very much in charge," Mr. Bush said that on this basis there was (are you seated?) "every reason to be hopeful," that "you've got to be hopeful."

Hopeful? Among the "naughty things" Mr. Andropov was involved in during his infamous career were the following: He played a key role in the crushing of freedom fighters in Hungary and Czechoslovakia (he reportedly had Hungarian patriots

Imre Nagy and Pal Maleter murdered after leading them to believe he would negotiate with them); he directed the Soviet genocide against the people of Afghanistan; he smashed the dissident movement in the Soviet Union; and there is compelling evidence that his KGB was behind the plot to murder the pope.

In an interview subsequent to his attending the funeral of Mr. Brezhnev, Mr. Bush, when asked if Mr. Andropov could be trusted to keep an agreement, said (for this one you should be lying down): "It's hard to say. ... I have no reason to believe that, as a person, [he] would break his word. I don't have any reason to believe the other way."

Yuri Andropov, a man of his word? A most bizarre assertion.

In his part of the book "The God That Failed," ex-communist Arthur Koestler wrote: "There is always a supply of new labels on the Cominform's black market in ideals. They deal in slogans as bootleggers deal in faked spirits; and the more innocent the customer, the more easily he becomes a victim of the ideological hooch sold under the trademark of Peace, Democracy, Progress, or what you will."

And this is what bothers me greatly about George Bush: When it comes to the Soviet ideological hooch, he is a very innocent customer. He seems to swallow it whole without so much as batting an eye. And this scares the hell out of me.

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